

TOWN OF CONCORD

TEMPORARY POLICY DIRECTIVE AND GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS CONDUCTED VIA REMOTE PARTICIPATION DUE TO COVID-19 STATE OF EMERGENCY

April 1, 2020

In response to Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, entitled "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c.30A, §20" ("Open Meeting Order"), Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 23, 2020, entitled "Order Assuring Continued Operations of Essential Services in the Commonwealth, Closing Certain Workplaces, and Prohibiting Gatherings of More than Ten People," and the recent public health emergency declarations by the Governor and the Select Board, and to reduce the possibility of exposure and proliferation of COVID-19, Town offices shall, until further notice, be open for essential Town staff and employees only.

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Order, the requirement that public bodies meet in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public has been temporarily suspended, provided that public access to the body's deliberations is made available through adequate alternative means. The requirement that a quorum of the public body be physically present for purposes of remote participation has also been suspended.

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

Board and Committee Meetings

To limit the potential for increased community spread of COVID-19 in Town buildings and to preserve Town resources, boards and committees should adhere to the following instructions effective immediately and until further notice:

- Executive Committees: Select Board, the Concord Carlisle Regional School District Committee, and the School Committee may continue to meet but agendas should be limited to mandatory or emergency functions.
- Regulatory Boards/Committees: the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Planning Board, the Board of Assessors, the Board of Health, the Board of Registrars, the Historic Districts Commission, the Light Board, the Natural Resources Commission, and the Public Works Commission should meet only if a statutory deadline is pending and, if the meeting is held, the agenda should be limited to necessary items (e.g. no correspondence, liaison reports).
- For Non-Regulatory Boards and Committees: meetings for all other boards and committees not referenced above should be postponed effective immediately. Chairs of those committees may petition the appointing authority (Moderator, Town Manager or

Select Board through its Chair) to hold a meeting to meet a statutory deadline or for emergency purposes.

- Zoom.us is the web/video conferencing platform for conducting remote participation in Concord public meetings and public hearings. The Town Manager's Office will schedule all board and committee meetings that have been approved under this policy.

II. PUBLIC BODY REMOTE PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

- Minuteman Media Network will simulcast executive committee meetings when requested. All other meetings will be recorded and posted on the web for viewing or rebroadcast on Channel 9.
- Most meetings will not have public participation through Zoom unless a public hearing is required. Public comments or questions for meetings should be emailed to publicinfo@concordma.gov in advance of the meeting to be included in the discussion when possible and in the meeting minutes.
- If the virtual meeting includes public participation, the Town will post instructions to access and participate remotely in the meeting or meetings in advance on the Town's website.
- All board and committee members, and relevant staff shall participate in the meeting remotely. At the start of the meeting, all present will announce their presence by name. When speaking, each member will state their name before speaking. During the course of the meeting, all votes will be conducted by roll call.
- Participants in the Zoom meeting should use the video option whenever possible. Additionally, they should be in a well-lit room so their face is clearly visible, sitting close enough to the microphone to be heard, and use their real full name in the "name" box. To check if you are close enough to the microphone, please use the "test microphone" feature through Zoom before you enter the meeting.
- Other Open Meeting Law requirements including those regarding the posting of meeting notices, keeping of minutes, identifying and maintaining documents used at the meeting, and going into executive session continue to apply.
- If an executive session is convened for a valid purpose under the Open Meeting Law, it will be held by web/video conferencing using one meeting number and password and then enter into executive session using a meeting number and password made known only to the members of the public body, and to Town staff and other individuals invited to the executive session by the public body consistent with the purpose of the executive session. At the conclusion of the executive session, the public body will return to open session to the web/video conferencing bridge for the public meeting to conduct further business or to adjourn.